

Message Text

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15 S

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NIC-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 IO-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 /083 W

----- 035432

P R 081020Z NOV 74

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2812

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 12212

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: PRC MESSAGE ON OCTOBER REVOLUTION ANNIVERSARY

REF: A) MOSCOW 14919; B) MOSCOW 15300, 1973; C) HONG KONG

7869; D) HONG KONG 11684 (EXDIS)

SUMMARY: PEKING'S GREETINGS ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION ARE MOST FORTHCOMING IN YEARS AND ACCEPT THE PORTION OF THE SOVIET PROPOSALS RELATING TO A NON-AGGRESSION AND NON-USE OF FORCE AGREEMENT. THE CHINESE, HOWEVER, HAVE LINKED SUCH ACCEPTANCE TO TROOP PULLBACK, WHICH HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY REJECTED BY THE SOVIETS. CHINESE MESSAGE MIGHT BE PURELY TACTICAL AND PROPAGANDA IN NATURE BUT MIGHT ALSO BE AN INDICATION OF SINCERE CHINESE DESIRE FOR AGREEMENT ON AT LEAST PRE-CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD LESSEN TENSIONS IN THE BORDER AREA AND PROVIDE BASIS FOR SUBSTANTIVE (AND PROBABLY DRAWN-OUT) BORDER NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

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1. PRC GREETINGS ON ANNIVERSARY OF OCTOBER REVOLUTION THIS

YEAR ARE THE MOST FORTHCOMING IN RECENT YEARS AND POSSIBLY SINCE THE 1969 BORDER CLASHES. AFTER REMARKS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE FACT THAT "DIFFERENCES IN PRINCIPLE" SHOULD NOT HINDER NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS-- BOTH SIMILAR TO 1973 MESSAGE--PRC HAS PROPOSED AGREEMENT ON MUTUAL NON-AGGRESSION AND NON-USE OF FORCE, MAINTENANCE OF STATUS QUO ON BORDER, AVERTING ARMED CONFLICT AND PULLBACK OF TROOPS FROM DISPUTED AREAS PRIOR TO PROCEEDING "TOWARD THE SOLUTION OF THE BORDER QUESTIONS AS A WHOLE."

2. THE ONLY NEW ELEMENT IN THIS PACKAGE PROPOSAL IS PRC ACCEPTANCE OF LONG-STANDING SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR NON-AGGRESSION AND NON-USE OF FORCE AGREEMENTS, WHICH WERE MADE MOST RECENTLY IN THE SOVIETS' MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO PEKING ON OCTOBER 1 (REFTEL A). THUS THE CHINESE MESSAGE IS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET MESSAGE. THE CHINESE, HOWEVER, HAVE LINKED THEIR ACCEPTANCE TO A TROOP PULLBACK, WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE PREVIOUSLY REJECTED AND DEPICTED AS BEING WITHDRAWAL OF MILITARY FORCES FROM ALL AREAS THE CHINESE CONSIDER AS DISPUTED (REFTEL B).

3. BOTH SOVIETS AND CHINESE AGREED THAT THE LAST ROUND OF BORDER TALKS IN PEKING IN JUNE PRODUCED NOTHING NEW (REFTEL C). THIS STALEMATE MIGHT WELL BE OF SOME CONCERN TO THE AGING CHINESE LEADERSHIP, WHICH REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH AT LEAST A FRAMEWORK FOR FRIENDLY FUTURE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES PRIOR TO PASSING THE MANTLE OF LEADERSHIP ON TO YOUNGER, UNTRIED COMRADES (REFTEL D). THUS, THE CHINESE, CONSIDERING THE DELINEATION OF THE BORDER AND DETERMINATION OF TERRITORIAL DISPUTES AS TOO COMPLEX AND CONTROVERSIAL TO BE RESOLVED FOR THE MOMENT, COULD BE SINCERELY SEEKING AGREEMENT ON AT LEAST THE NECESSARY PRE-CONDITIONS FOR RESUMED, MEANINGFUL BORDER NEGOTIATIONS AS WELL AS EASING TENSIONS ALONG THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN PROCLAIMING TO ALL COMERS THEIR REASONABLE APPROACH TO SETTling THE BORDER DISPUTE AND COMPLAINING OF PEKING'S NEGATIVE RESPONSE. BY TAKING A PUBLIC POSITION ACCEPTING A PART OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL, THE CHINESE COULD BE SEEKING TACTICAL AND PROPAGANDA

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ADVANTAGE OVER THE SOVIETS, WHO PRESUMABLY WILL BE FORCED TO RESPOND IN SOME FASHION TO PEKING'S MESSAGE.

5. THUS FAR, PEKING MESSAGE HAS NOT BEEN CARRIED BY NCNA NOR BY HONG KONG COMMUNIST PRESS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES, ANNIVERSARY MESSAGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: Izenbel0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974HONGK12212
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740321-0881
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741160/aaaabyoz.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) MOSCOW 14919; B) MOSCOW 15300, 19, 73; C) HONG KONG
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: Izenbel0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <31 MAR 2003 by Izenbel0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRC MESSAGE ON OCTOBER REVOLUTION ANNIVERSARY
TAGS: PFOR, CH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005